START A CONVERSATION
Let’s confront workplace racial inequality

shrm.org/tfaw
#TogetherForwardAtWork
Together Forward @Work is a call to action for the business community to drive racism and social injustice out of America’s workplaces one honest conversation at a time.

To create better workplaces, first we must improve the cultures that fuel them.

Let’s talk about confronting workplace racism.

1. Invite a colleague to have coffee, either in person or virtually.

2. Use these cards to start a conversation.

3. Listen and ask thoughtful questions.

4. Use insights gained to start making true workplace change.
Almost 1/3 of American workers do not feel safe voicing their opinions about racial bias in the workplace.

- How important is it to you to be able to voice your opinion about racial bias in the workplace?
- Should employers empower their workers to have conversations about racism in the workplace?
More than 1/4 of American workers say their workplace is not doing enough to provide opportunities for Black employees within the organization.

- Are Black employees receiving the same amount of opportunities as white employees within your organization?
- How is your employer investing in growth opportunities for minorities?
- Does your employer offer employee resource groups?
Over 70% of HR professionals believe it’s appropriate to discuss race at work.

- Does your employer offer training on diversity, equity and inclusion topics?
- Do you feel comfortable talking to your human resources department about race relations?
  - Why or why not?
52% of Black American workers believe they have been treated unfairly in the workplace due to their race, compared to 4% of white workers who believe they have been treated unfairly at work because of their race.

- Have you ever felt you were treated unfairly in the workplace due to your race?
- How does your organization prioritize equity, making sure all people are treated fairly and with respect in the workplace?
Almost half of HR professionals say incivility (e.g., rude comments or slights) based on race exists in their workplace.

- Have you ever been the target of incivility at work?
  - How did that make you feel?
  - What action did you take?
- Have you ever witnessed an employee act with incivility in the workplace?
  - Did you respond and/or hold the employee accountable?
  - Did you notify HR?
More than 1/3 of HR professionals say their organization is not doing enough to promote racial justice in the world.

- Do you feel your organization has a responsibility to promote racial justice in the world?

- How would you rate your organization’s ability to make sure everyone feels equally valued at work?
60% of HR professionals believe organizations have a responsibility to take a stance on important social/societal issues and to communicate that position.

- Do you believe it’s an organization’s responsibility to take a stance on important social/societal issues and to communicate its position?
- What has your employer done to communicate its stance on important social/societal issues?
1/3 of Black American workers do not feel respected and valued at work.

- Have you ever felt that your ideas and opinions were not respected and/or valued at work due to your race?
- How would you rate your organization’s ability to make sure everyone feels equally valued at work?
  - What could be done to improve this?
25% of American workers say they gained respect for their co-workers based on their colleagues’ response to protests against racial injustice.

• Are you and/or your co-workers comfortable talking about racial injustice?

• Do you feel that having co-workers who respond to racial injustice enhances workplace culture?

• At your workplace, do employees believe the response expected of them is the proper one?
More than 1/3 of Black American workers say discrimination based on race or ethnicity exists in their workplace.

- Do you believe discrimination based on race or ethnicity exists in your workplace?
  - Why or why not?
  - How does that make you feel?
78% of Black HR professionals believe organizations have a responsibility to take a stance on important social/societal issues and to communicate that position.

- Has your organization taken a stance on important social/societal issues?
  - If so, what stance has it taken?
67% of organizations have not solicited their workers’ thoughts about racial injustice and the related protests.

- Do you think organizations should ask employees about their thoughts on racial injustice?
- How has your organization determined the feelings and concerns of workers regarding racial injustice and the related protests?
52% of organizations have provided or plan to provide new training on implicit/unconscious bias, equity, inclusion or other diversity-related topics.

- What types of new training has your organization provided on implicit/unconscious bias, equity, inclusion or other diversity-related topics?
- Have you sought out guidance or education on how to address your own implicit/unconscious bias?
A majority of organizations have not considered holding any type of town hall or organizational meeting on the topic of racial injustice, yet 81% of organizations have released a statement to employees and 51% have released a statement to customers.

• Should organizations do more than issue a statement regarding racial injustice?

• How would you like to see your organization respond to racial injustice?
Let’s confront workplace racism.

ADDITIONAL CONVERSATION STARTERS:

• 1/3 of organizations have hosted or will host a town hall or other type of organizational meeting with employees to communicate the organization’s stance on and planned actions regarding racial injustice.
  • Has your organization hosted a town hall or other type of organizational meeting with employees to communicate the organization’s stance on and planned actions regarding racial injustice?
  • Do you feel it’s important to understand your organization’s stance regarding racial injustice? Why or why not?

• 68% of Black HR professionals would decrease or have decreased the amount of goods or services purchased from a company that remained silent on the topic of racial injustice.
  • Would you decrease or have you already decreased the amount of goods or services purchased from a company that has remained silent on the topic of racial injustice?

shrm.org/tfaw
#TogetherForwardAtWork